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News From Congressman Ben Cline



## Sixth District Perspectives with Congressman Ben Cline

While the House of Representatives did not have any votes on the Floor last week, Speaker Pelosi continued to pursue her liberal agenda by jamming partisan spending bills for the next fiscal year through the House Appropriations Committee. While Members reached a few areas of bipartisan agreement, overall, the bills undermine the fiscal integrity of our Nation by continuing annual deficits and worsening our current fiscal crisis. While I opposed and voted against each of these partisan bills, I offered several amendments that reflected the values and priorities of the people of Virginia's Sixth District. Also, Members reacted to the Supreme Court's recent decisions as it finished one of its most consequential terms in history. The Court ruled in favor of the Free Exercise of religion, against Biden's efforts to impose a radical climate agenda through executive fiat, and, sadly, to allow the Administration to end the "Remain in Mexico" policy. Additionally, my colleagues and I demanded the Department of Justice act immediately to protect Pro-Life centers from acts of vandalism. Finally, as the Nation celebrated our Independence, I urged all of us to remember the ideals of our Founding Fathers and work to ensure the greatest country in the history of the world has her best days ahead.

### Liberal Spending Bills in Appropriations

The House Appropriations Committee continued its work of marking up the 12 bills that will fund the Federal government for the Fiscal Year 2023. Republicans tried and failed to get provisions included in the bills to support conservative initiatives. In addition, the final price tag on each piece of legislation this week was fiscally irresponsible, and most included "poison pills" that made it impossible to vote in favor of the bills. My colleagues and I introduced a number of amendments to stop the agenda of Speaker Pelosi and President Biden, ensure tax dollars are not being used to fund liberal pet projects and Green New Deal priorities, and we fought to include provisions to secure our border, stop Constitutionally invalid gun control

attempts, and to protect life against taxpayer-funded abortion. For the bill funding the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies (LHHS), I fought to ensure that we are not abusing emergency health powers and not using taxpayer money to fund abortion. And for the bill funding the Departments of Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies (CJS), I fought to ensure that the federal government enforces the rule of law without abridging the civil and Constitutional liberties of the American people.

#### *Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies (LHHS)*

In one of the most egregious moves by the Democrats, the historically bipartisan Hyde Amendment was again removed from the bill. As you may know, the Hyde Amendment ensures that taxpayer dollars are not used to fund or perform abortions – a notion that a majority of Americans support. Further, this bill also excluded the Weldon Amendment, which ensures that health care providers cannot be forced to provide abortion services, a protection that until recently was in place since 2005. We should never force our health care workers to participate in an abortion when they have taken an oath to heal and to do no harm. To put a health care provider's license in jeopardy by mandating they perform a procedure they are morally opposed to is simply wrong. Additionally, I also introduced an amendment to the LHHS bill to prohibit the use of a public health emergency to implement gun control. As I argued in debate on my amendment, using emergency powers to disarm the citizenry is the action of a third-world county, not the United States. Remarkably, my amendment was rejected as House Democrats turn a blind eye to the unconstitutional power grabs by President Biden.



*Debating my amendment to prohibit using public health emergencies for the purposes of gun control*

#### *Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies (CJS) & Homeland Security*

While this bill contained provisions I could support related to the security of our Nation and the enforcement of our laws, the Democrats' bill failed to include important language and was far too costly at a time of fiscal crisis for the Federal government and a 40-year high in inflation. The bill provides double-digit percentage increases in funding for agencies and continues course toward implementing many of the Administration's failed policies. Additionally, the bill increased state and local grant programs by 22 percent, including in many states and cities that have wildly mismanaged their budgets and inappropriately used COVID relief funds. Instead, the bill should have done more to fund border security and stop the rampant human and drug smuggling that is being exacerbated by this border crisis. To that end, I introduced an amendment that would reduce \$46.5 million from proposed funding to support TSA collective bargaining and use that funding to increase border technology procurement for Customs and

Border Protection. Unfortunately, but not unexpectedly, my amendment was rejected by Committee Democrats.



*Introducing my amendment to bolster border security*

While Democrats rejected a number of provisions and amendments to rein in spending and correct course from Biden and Pelosi's failed agenda, we forced them to accept Republican amendments on thwarting Iran, supporting Israel, keeping track of funding for Ukraine, and preventing the Biden Administration's ludicrous proposal of distributing crack pipes to drug users. Rest assured that I will continue to fight against wasteful spending and fight to correct course away from the Left's radical agenda, as well as fight to ensure that the Constitution is followed wherein Congress makes the laws and the Executive Branch we fund executes and enforces the law.

### **SCOTUS Term Wrap-Up**

This year's Supreme Court session will go down in history as one of the most important terms for restoring the integrity of the text of the Constitution. In its last week, the Court announced its remaining decisions and upheld Freedom of Speech and the Free Exercise of religion, as well as struck a blow to the Green New Deal agenda of the Biden Administration, yet there were negative repercussions for the border crisis. First, in ruling that a football coach is Constitutionally permitted to pray after high school football games, the Court upheld the freedom to exercise religion. Writing for the majority, Justice Gorsuch held, "The Constitution and the best of our traditions counsel mutual respect and tolerance, not censorship and suppression, for religious and nonreligious views alike." Second, the Court ruled that the Biden Administration cannot use regulatory agencies like the EPA to bypass Congress and implement their Green New Deal agenda. "Capping carbon dioxide emissions at a level that will force a nationwide transition away from the use of coal to generate electricity may be a sensible 'solution to the crisis of the day,'" Chief Justice John Roberts wrote. But only Congress, or an agency with express authority from Congress, can adopt a "decision of such magnitude and consequence," the Court held.

Lastly, however, I was disappointed with the Court's decision in the case regarding the Trump Administration's "Remain in Mexico" policy, which the Biden Administration tried to halt shortly after taking office. We must end incentives for illegal immigration to avoid situations like those that recently claimed the lives of 53 migrants who were smuggled into the country and abandoned. I am afraid that with the Court ruling against the "Remain in Mexico" policy, the cartels will be emboldened to smuggle even more illegals across our border, overwhelming an already out-of-control situation. Now that the Court has ruled, it is imperative that Congress act on this issue. In the end though, the Court in this session returned the Nation much closer to the Constitution that must guide this great democratic experiment in self-governance.



### **Pro-Life Pregnancy Centers Protection**

In the days following the Supreme Court's decision in the *Dobbs* case, many Pro-Life pregnancy centers, including the Blue Ridge Pregnancy Center in Lynchburg, were the victims of vandalism and attacks. These actions are unacceptable and exhibit a pattern of intimidation against Pro-Life organizations, which should be condemned by all public officials. Centers such as the Blue Ridge Pregnancy Center provide important services to expecting mothers that are vital to them and their baby's health. That is why last week my colleagues and I wrote the DOJ to demand that they fully investigate and prosecute those responsible for these actions. It is the duty of Attorney General Garland to enforce the law and ensure those responsible for these attacks face justice. Failing to do so would only further embolden future acts of vandalism and harm those who rely on the services provided by crisis pregnancy centers. Rest assured I will continue to stand for the rule of law. You may read our full letter [here](#). Additionally, find an article highlighting our letter [here](#).



## The Celebration of American Independence

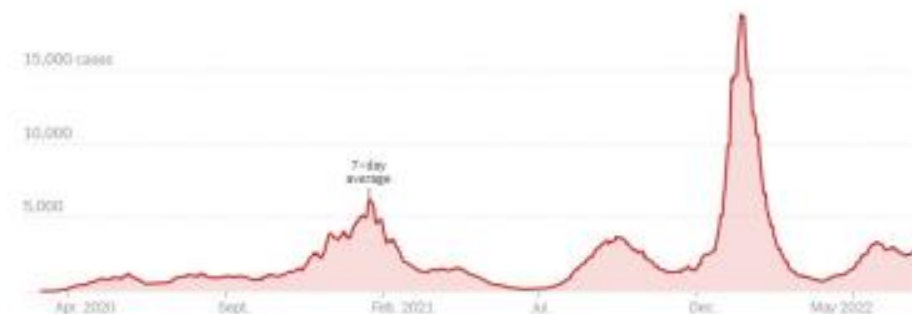
On July 2, 1776, the Second Continental Congress gathered in Philadelphia and voted to officially sever ties with Great Britain. Pledging their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor, 56 brave men proclaimed to the world the sovereignty of the Thirteen Colonies. This statement, made public two days later, has since become known as the Declaration of Independence, and its words are at the very core of the American Ideal.

"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness."



## COVID-19 Update

Last week in Virginia there was an average 33 daily cases of COVID-19 per 100,000 residents, up from 29 daily cases last week. This week's COVID-19 test positivity rate rose to 20%. For more information, click [here](#).



Thank you for the opportunity to serve as your Congressman. If my office can ever be of assistance, please contact my Washington office at (202) 225-5431.

For the latest updates from Washington and across the Sixth District, please follow my [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) pages.

*Ben Clive*

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